



Frequently Asked Questions

How to vote using Ranked Choice Voting

What is Ranked Choice Voting?

Ranked Choice Voting (RCV) is a method of voting allowing voters to rank multiple candidates in order of preference. RCV was passed by the voters of Minneapolis as an amendment to the City Charter in 2006 and was first used in the city in 2009. RCV combines the primary and the general election into one event. In Minneapolis, voters may rank up to three different candidates for each municipal office.

What offices are elected using Ranked Choice Voting?

RCV is used for Minneapolis municipal offices: Mayor, City Council, Board of Estimate and Taxation, and Park and Recreation Board (both at-large and by district.) RCV is NOT used in elections for the school board, county, state, or federal offices.

How do voters use Ranked Choice Voting?

Minneapolis voters may rank up to three different candidates for single and multiple seat municipal offices. Each ballot will have three repeating columns. In each office, voters will complete the ballot from left to right, indicating their first choice for each race in the first column by filling in the oval next to the selected candidate's name. If voters wish to rank different second and third choices, they will select them in the second and third columns on the ballot.

Does my vote still count if I vote for the same candidate three times?

Yes. Your vote will count only once for that candidate. If you rank one candidate as your first, second, and third choice, it is the same as if you left the second and third choices blank. A candidate's chances of winning are not improved by selecting that candidate at more than one ranking on a ballot.

Does my vote still count if I only select one choice?

Yes. Your vote will count for your one choice. You may - but are not required to - rank up to three different choices for each office. Your vote for a candidate stays with that candidate through all rounds of counting until that candidate is defeated, and only then is your vote is transferred to your next ranked candidate.

Can I give multiple candidates the same ranking?

No. Ranking more than one candidate in a column is an overvote, and will cause that column to be skipped and the overvote transferred to your next ranked choice in the subsequent column, if any.

If you are voting in your polling place on Election Day, both the AutoMARK ballot marker and the ballot counter will help avoid an overvote. The AutoMARK will guide voters who use it through all three columns in each office and will not allow marking more than one candidate per column in any office. The Ballot Counter will notify a voter if more than one candidate is selected in any column.

Will the voting equipment tell me if I've made an error specific to RCV?

No. In the polling place, voters should pay special attention to avoid making mistakes specific to RCV that the equipment cannot detect. Those errors are:

- Selecting the same candidate in more than one column of an office
- Skipping a column between ranked candidates

For more information - vote.MinneapolisMN.gov or call





How are ranked-choice ballots counted?

On Election Night, ballot counting machines are used to provide first-round results, counting every first-choice selection. Candidates who have enough first-choice votes to win their particular races will be declared winners. Races in which it is not possible to determine winners solely on the first rankings will proceed to round-by-round RCV tabulation beginning the day following the election.

The counting process varies depending on whether a particular race is for one seat or multiple seats:

- **For single seat offices** (Mayor, City Council, and Park and Recreation Board district commissioners)

Candidates with no mathematical possibility of winning (including the candidate with the lowest number of first-choice votes) are defeated, and votes for those candidates are transferred to the next ranked candidate on those ballots. Votes are re-tallied. If no candidate reaches the threshold to be elected, this process is repeated until either a candidate reaches the required threshold and is declared the winner, or only two candidates remain and the candidate with the most votes is elected.

- **For multiple seat offices** (two seats for Board of Estimate and Taxation at-large, and three seats for Park and Recreation Board at-large)

Candidates with no mathematical possibility of winning are defeated, and votes from those candidates are transferred to the next ranked candidate on those ballots. When a candidate reaches the required threshold and is declared elected, that candidate's surplus votes over the threshold are distributed proportionately to the next ranked candidates on the ballots of the elected candidate. The process of defeating and electing candidates continues until the required number of candidates is elected.

Results are unofficial until certified by the Minneapolis City Council as the Canvassing Board.

What is the threshold of votes required for a candidate to win?

The threshold of votes a candidate needs to be elected in a race is determined based on the number of seats to be filled in that race.

Number of seats	Votes needed
1 seat – Mayor, City Council, Park and Recreation Board District Commissioner	50% plus one of the number of votes for that office, disregarding fractions
2 at-large seats - Board of Estimate and Taxation	33 1/3% plus one of the number of votes for that office, disregarding fractions
3 at-large seats - Park and Recreation Board Commissioners	25% plus one of the number of votes for that office, disregarding fractions